

**ST. PATRICK'S DAY PLANNER
FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS**

Don't depend on dumb luck
this St. Patrick's Day.

Friends
Don't Let
Friends
Drive Drunk.
Designate a Sober Driver.

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This St. Patrick's Day**

Don't Depend on Dumb Luck—Designate a Sober Driver Before the Party Begins

- In 2004, 48 percent of all traffic fatalities that occurred during the evening of St. Patrick's Day to the early hours of the following morning involved drivers with blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of .01 and higher. Of those fatalities, a vast majority were crashes where the driver's BAC was .08 or higher – the illegal limit in all states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. This year, the risk may be even higher since St. Patrick's Day will be celebrated on a Friday night.
- St. Patrick's Day has become a big night out for many Americans—particularly among young adults. But it has also become a dangerous night out on our roadways due to impaired drivers.
- Whether meeting a few friends at the local pub after work or attending the **[big local parade/party]**, if you plan on using alcohol, never drive while impaired—and never let your friends drive if you think they are impaired.
- Much of the death and destruction from drunk drivers can be prevented by reminding all drivers of a few simple precautions:
 - ❖ Designate your sober driver before the party begins and give that person your car keys;
 - ❖ If you're impaired, call a taxi, use mass transit or call a sober friend or family member to get you home safely;
 - ❖ Use your community's Sober Rides program **[Insert your local Sober Rides specifics here]**;
 - ❖ Report impaired drivers to law enforcement;
 - ❖ Always buckle up—it's still your best defense against an impaired driver.

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Impaired Driving is a Deadly Problem

- Too many people still don't understand that alcohol, drugs and driving don't mix. Impaired driving is no accident—nor is it a victimless crime.

- Overall in 2004, over 15,000 people died in highway crashes involving a driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .01 or higher. Of those, nearly 13,000 were in crashes where the BAC was .08 or higher.

Impaired Driving Creates Serious Consequences

- The tragedies and costs from drinking and driving impaired do not just end at the potential death, disfigurement, disability and injury caused by impaired drivers.
- Driving a car or riding a motorcycle while impaired is not worth the risk. The consequences are serious and real. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be significant.
- Violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver's license, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other unanticipated expenses from attorney fees, other fines and court costs, car towing and repairs, lost time at work, etc.
- Refuse a sobriety test in many jurisdictions and you can lose your license on the spot and have your car impounded.
- Plus, there is the added embarrassment, humiliation, and potential loss and consequence after informing family, friends and employers.
- Please remember that *Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk*. Designate your sober driver before the St. Patrick's Day parties begin.
- For more information, please visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.

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